

# WE NEED MEN, MANY MEN, CRIES CONAN DOYLE

Noted English Author Implores All Englishmen to Rally and Make All Efforts and Sacrifices for their Country

By ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE.  
Author of "Sherlock Holmes," "The Lost World," "The Poison Belt," etc.

It is possible that there are still some of our people who do not understand the causes of this war, and who are ignorant of the great stakes at issue which will speedily have so important a bearing upon the lives of each and all of them? It is hard to believe it, and yet it is so stated by some who profess to know. Let me try, in the shortest space and in the clearest words that I can command, to lay before them both the causes and the possible effects, and to implore them now, at this very moment, before it is too late, to make those efforts and sacrifices which the occasion demands.

In Germany every man from the ages of 16 to 55 is with the colors. The last man has been called up. And yet we hear—we could not bear to see—that young athletic men in this country are playing football or cricket, while our streets are full of those who should be in our camps.

All our lives have been but a preparation for this supreme moment. All our future lives will be determined by how we bear ourselves in these few months to come. Shame, shame on the man who fails his country in this hour of need! I would not force him to serve. I could not think that the service of such a man was of any avail. Let the country be served by free men, and let them deal with the coward or the slacker who flinches.

The causes of the war are only of moment to us at this stage, in that we gain more strength in our arms and more iron in our souls by a knowledge that it is for all that is honorable and sacred for which we fight. What really concerns us is that we are in a fight for our national life, that we must fight through to the end, and that each and all of us must help, in his own way, to the last ounce of his strength, that this end may be victory.

That is the essence of the situation. It is not words and phrases that we need, but men, men—and always more men. If words can bring the men they are of avail. If not they may wait for the times to mend.

There is a doubt in the mind of any man as to the justice of his country's quarrel, then even a writer may find work ready to his hand.

Let us cast our minds back upon the events which have led up to this conflict. They may be divided into two separate classes, those which prepared the general situation and those which caused the actual quarrel. Each of these I will treat in its turn.

It is a matter of common knowledge, one which a man must be blind and deaf not to understand, that for many years Germany, intoxicated by her success in war and by her increase of wealth, has regarded the British Empire with eyes of jealousy and hatred.

It has never been alleged by those who gave expression to this almost universal national passion that Great Britain had in any way, either historically or commercially, done Germany a mischief. Even our most bitter detractors, when asked to give any definite historical reason for their dislike, were compelled to put forward such ludicrous excuses as that the British had abandoned the Prussian King in the year 1761, quite oblivious of the fact that the same Prussian King had abandoned his own allies in the same war under far more damaging circumstances, and that he had turned to the victor and promised to be a vassal in the vital interests of a state are in question.

With all their malevolence they could give no examples of any ill turn done by us until their deliberate policy had forced us into antagonism. On the other hand, a long list of occasions could easily be compiled on which we had helped them in some common cause from the days of Marlborough to those of Bismarck. Until the twentieth century had turned they had no possible cause for political hatred against us.

In commerce our record was even more clear. Never in any way had we interfered with that great development of trade which has turned the British Empire from the poorest to one of the richest of European states. Our markets were open to them untaxed, while our own manufacturers paid 20 per cent. in Germany. The markets of India, of Egypt and of every portion of the empire which had no self-appointed tariff were as open to German goods as to British ones.

Nothing could possibly have been more generous than our commercial treatment. No doubt there was some grumbling when cheap imitations of our own goods were occasionally found to oust the originals from their markets. Such feeling was by no means human. But in the matters of commerce, as in all matters political before the dawn of this century, they have no shadow of a grievance against us.

And yet they hated us with a most bitter hatred, a hatred which long antedated the days when we were compelled to take a definite stand against them. In all sorts of ways this hatred showed itself, in the distastes of professors, in the pages of books, in the columns of the press.

Usually it was a sullen, silent dislike. Sometimes it would flame up suddenly into bitter utterance, as at the time of the unseemly dispute about the death of the Kaiser's father, or on the occasion of the Jameson raid. And yet this bitter antagonism was in no way reciprocated in this country. If a poll had been taken at any time up to the end of the century as to which European country was our natural ally, the vote would have gone overwhelmingly for Germany. America first and then Germany would have been the verdict of nine men out of ten.

But then occurred two events which steadily the easy going Briton, and made him look more intently and with a more questioning gaze at his distant cousin over the water. Those two events were the Boer war and the building of the German fleet. The first showed us, to our amazement, the bitter desire which Germany had to do us some mischief; the second made us realize that she was forging a weapon with which that desire might be fulfilled.

less. The difference as it struck men at the time may be summarized in the passage from a British writer of the period:

"But it was very different with Germany," he says. "Again and again in the world's history we have been the friends and the allies of these people. It was so in the days of Marlborough, it was so in the days of Frederick, it was so in those of Napoleon. When we could not help them with men we helped them with money. Our fleet has crushed their enemies."

"And now, for the first time in history, we have had a chance of seeing who were our friends in Europe, and nowhere have we met more hatred and more slaughter than from the German press and the German people. Their most respectable journals have not hesitated to represent the British troops—troops every bit as humane and as highly disciplined as their own—not only as committing outrages on person and property but even as murdering women and children."

"At first this unexpected phenomenon merely surprised the British people, then it pained them, and finally, after two years of it, it has roused a deep, enduring anger in their minds."

He goes on to say: "The continued attacks upon us have left an enduring feeling of resentment which will not and should not die away in this generation. It is not too much to say that five years ago a complete defeat of Germany in a European war would have certainly caused British intervention."

"Public sentiment and racial affinity would never have allowed us to see her really go to the wall. And now it is certain that in our lifetime no British guinea and no soldier's life would under any circumstances be spent for such an end. That is one strange result of the Boer war, and in the long run it is possible that it may prove not the least important."

Such was the prevailing mood of the nation when they perceived Germany, under the lead of her Emperor, following up her expressions of enmity by starting with restless energy to build up a formidable fleet, adding programs to programs, out of all possible proportion to the German fleet, in order to be defended or to the German coast line exposed to attack. Already vainglorious boasts were made that Germany was the successor to Britain upon the seas.

"The Admiral of the Atlantic greets the Admiral of the Pacific," said the Kaiser later in a message to the Czar.

What was Britain to do under this growing menace? So long as she was isolated the diplomacy of Germany might form some naval coalition against her. She took the steps which were necessary for her own safety, and without forming an alliance she composed her differences with France and Russia and drew closer the friendship which united her with her old rival across the Channel.

The first fruit of the new German fleet was the Entente Cordiale. We had found our enemy. It was necessary that we should find our friends. Thus we were driven into our present combination.

And now we had to justify our friendship. For the first time we were compelled to openly oppose Germany in the deep and dangerous game of world politics. They wished to see if our understanding was a reality or a sham. Could they drive a wedge between us by showing us that we were a fair weather friend?

Twice they tried it, once in 1906 when they bullied France into a conference at Algeiras, but found that Britain was firm at her side, and again in 1911 when in a time of profound peace they stirred up trouble by sending a gunboat to Agadir, and pushed matters to the very verge of war. But no threats induced Britain to be false to her mutual insurance with France.

Now for the third and most fatal one they have demanded that we forswear ourselves and break our own bond lest a worse thing befall us. Blind and foolish they did not know that past experience that we would keep our promise given. In their madness they have wrought an irreparable evil to themselves, to us and to all Europe.

I have shown that we have in very truth never injured nor desired to injure Germany in commerce, nor have we interfered with that great development of trade which has turned the British Empire from the poorest to one of the richest of European states. Our markets were open to them untaxed, while our own manufacturers paid 20 per cent. in Germany. The markets of India, of Egypt and of every portion of the empire which had no self-appointed tariff were as open to German goods as to British ones.

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But such was their absurd self-deception about the most virile of European races. Did we propose disarmament, then it was not humanitarianism but cowardice that prompted us, and their answer was to enlarge their program. Did we suggest a navy building holiday, it was but a cloak for our weakness and an incitement that they should redouble their efforts.

Public opinion has to be strongly moved before our country can fight, and public opinion under a Liberal Government might well be divided upon the subject of Russia. Therefore if the quarrel could be so arranged as to seem to be entirely one between Teuton and Slav, there was a good chance that Britain would remain undecided until the swift German sword had done its work. Then, with the grim acquiescence of our deserted allies, the still bloody sword would be turned upon our



"The Last War," by W. A. Duggins.

Courtesy of the Cornhill Building.

forts. Our decay had become a part of their national faith.

At first the wish may have been the father to the thought, but soon under the reiterated assertions of their crazy professors the proposition became indisputable. Bernhardi in his book upon the next war cannot conceal the contempt in which he has learned to hold us. Niebuhr long ago had prophesied the coming fall of Britain, and every year was believed to bring it nearer and to make it more certain.

To those jaundiced eyes all seemed yellow, when the yellowness lay only in themselves. Our army, our navy, our colonies, all were equally rotten. "Old England, old indeed and corrupt, rotten through and through," one blow and the vast sham would fly to pieces, and from those pieces the victor could choose his reward. Listen to Prof. Treitschke, a man who above all others has been the evil genius of his country and has done most to push it toward this abyss:

"A thing that is wholly a sham," he cried, in allusion to our empire, "cannot, in this universe of ours, endure for ever. It may endure for a day, but its doom is certain."

Were ever words more true when applied to the narrow bureaucracy and swaggering funkism of Prussia, the most artificial and ossified sham that ever our days have seen? See which will crack first, our democracy or this, now that both have been plunged into the furnace together. The day of God's testing has come, and we shall see which can best abide it.

I have tried to show that we are in no way to blame for the hostility which has grown up between us. So far as it had any solid cause at all, it has arisen from fixed factors, which could no more be changed by us than the geographical position which has laid us right across their exit to the oceans of the world. That this deeply rooted national sentiment, which for ever regarding us as the Carthage to which they were destined to play the part of Rome, would, sooner or later, have brought about war between us, is, in my opinion, beyond all doubt. It was planned to come at the moment which was least favorable for Britain.

"Even English attempts at a rapprochement must not blind us to the real situation," says Bernhardi. "We may, at most, use them to delay the necessary and inevitable war until we may fairly imagine we have some prospect of success."

A more shameless sentence was never penned, and one stands marvelling which is the more grotesque—the cynicism of the sentiment or the folly which gave such a warning to the victim. For be it remembered that Bernhardi's words are to be taken very seriously, for they are not the ravings of some Pan-German monomaniac, but the considered views of the foremost military writer of Germany, one who is in touch with those inner circles whose opinions are the springs of national policy.

"Our last and greatest reckoning is to be with Great Britain," said the bitter Treitschke.

Sooner or later the shock was to come. Germany sat brooding over the chessboard of the world waiting for the opening which should assure a winning game.

It was clear that she should take her enemies separately rather than together. If Britain were attacked it was almost certain that France and Russia would stand by her side. But if, on the contrary, the quarrel could be made

with these two Powers, and especially with Russia, in the first instance, then it was by no means so certain that Great Britain would be drawn into the struggle.

Public opinion has to be strongly moved before our country can fight, and public opinion under a Liberal Government might well be divided upon the subject of Russia. Therefore if the quarrel could be so arranged as to seem to be entirely one between Teuton and Slav, there was a good chance that Britain would remain undecided until the swift German sword had done its work. Then, with the grim acquiescence of our deserted allies, the still bloody sword would be turned upon our

ties and left her northern exposed to attack. Britain could guarantee the treaty, and Britain could be relied upon.

Now, on the first occasion of testing the value of her word, it was supposed that she would regard the treaty as a worthless scrap of paper and stand by unmoved while the little state which had trusted her was flooded by the armies of the invader. It was unthinkable.

There is a settled and assured future if we win. There is darkness and trouble if we lose. But we are now, even in these weeks and months that are passing, that the final reckoning is being taken, and when once the sum is made up no further effort can change it.

What are our lives or our labors, our fortunes or our families, or other things of this world, against the great mother of us all? We are but the leaves of the tree. What matter if we flutter down to-day or to-morrow so long as the great trunk stands and the burrowing roots are firm? Happy the man who can die with the thought that in this greatest crisis all he has served his country to the uttermost; but who would bear the thoughts of him who lives on with the memory that he had shirked his duty and failed his country at the moment of her need?

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Makes Clear the Causes and Possible Effects of Great Conflict—British Victory Means Relief for German People

Consider, on the other hand, what we should suffer if we were to lose. All the troubles of the last ten years would be with us still, but in a greatly exaggerated form. A larger and stronger Germany would dominate Europe and would overshadow our lives.

Her coastline would be increased, her ports would face our own, her coaling stations would be in every sea, and her great army, greater than ever, would be within striking distance of our shores. To avoid sinking forever into the condition of a dependency we should be compelled to have recourse to rigid compulsory service, and our diminished revenues would be all turned to the needs of self-defence.

Such would be the miserable condition in which we should hand on to our children that free and glorious empire which we inherited in all the fullness of its richness and its splendor from those strong fathers who have built it up. What peace of mind, what self-respect, could be left for us in the remainder of our lives? The weight of dishonor would be always upon our hearts. And yet this will surely be our fate and our future if we do not nerve our souls and brace our arms for victory.

No regrets will avail, no excuses will help, no after thoughts can prolix us. It is now, now, even in these weeks and months that are passing, that the final reckoning is being taken, and when once the sum is made up no further effort can change it.

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mentary visit to the Sultan whose hands were still wet with the blood of murdered Christians. Could that be reconciled with what is right?

A little later he saw the Kaiser once again pushing himself into Mediterranean politics, where no direct German interest lay, and endeavoring to tamale up the French developments in northern Africa by provocative personal appearances at Moroccan and later by sending a gunboat to intrude upon a scene of action which had already by the treaty of Algeiras been allotted to France. How could an honest German whose mind was undebauched by a controlled press justify such an interference as that?

He is or should be aware that in annexing Bosnia Austria was tearing up a treaty without the consent of other signatories, and that his own country was supporting and probably inciting her ally to this public breach of faith. Could he honestly think that this was right? And finally he must know, for his own Chancellor has publicly proclaimed it, that the invasion of Belgium was a breach of international right, and that Germany, or rather Prussia, had perjured herself upon the day that the first of her soldiers passed over the frontier.

How can he explain all this to himself, save on a theory that might be right; that no moral law applies to the superman, and that so long as one knows one's way through the real can matter little? To such a point of degradation have public morals been brought by the influence of the teachings of Prussian military philosophy, of the back as far as Frederick the Second, but intensified by the exhortations of press and professors during our own time. The mind of the average kindly German citizen has been debauched and yet again debauched until it needed just such a world crisis as this to startle him and save him from his obsession and to see his position and that of his country in its true relation with humanity and progress.

Thus I say that for the German who stands outside the ruling classes, our victory would bring a lasting relief and some hope that in future his destiny should be controlled by his own judgment and not by the passions or interests of those against whom he has at present no appeal. A system which has brought disaster to Germany and chaos to all Europe can never, one would think, be resumed, and amid the debris of his empire the Germans may pick up that precious jewel of personal freedom which is above the splendor of foreign conquest. A Hapsburg or a Hohenzollern may find his true place as the servant rather than the master of a nation.

But apart from Germany, look at the effects which our victory must have over the whole wide world. Everywhere it will mean the triumph of reasoned democracy, of public debate, of ordered freedom in which every man is an active unit in the system of his own Government, while our own Government would stand for a victory to a privileged class, the thrusting down of the civilian by the arrogance and intolerance of militarism and the subjection of all that is human and progressive to all that is cruel, narrow and reactionary.

This is the stake for which we play, and the world will lose or gain as well as we. You may well come, you democratic overseas men of our blood, to rally round us now, for all that you cherish, all that is bred in your very bones, is that for which we fight.

And you, lovers of freedom in every land, we claim at least your prayers and your wishes for if our sword be broken you will be the poorer, not for our sword will not be broken, nor shall it ever drop from our hands until this matter is forever set in order. If every ally we have upon earth were to go down in blood and ruin, still would we fight through to the appointed end.

Defeat should not daunt us. Inclusive victory shall not turn us from our purpose. The grind of poverty and the weariness of hopes deferred shall not blunt the edge of our resolve. With God's help we shall go to the end, and when that goal is reached it is our prayer that a new era shall come as our reward, in which, by common action of States with State, mortal hatreds and strivings shall be appeased, and shall no longer be estranged from land, and huge armies and fleets will be nightmares of the past. Thus, as ever, the throes of evil may give birth to good.

Still, then, our task stands clear before us. I ask that we ask for all we have in strength and resolution. Have you who read this